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Taken all in all, PROF. SMYTH has performed a difficult task in an eminently satisfactory and scholarly manner; and if it be true that there is always a place for a good book, we need not fear for the success of at least this 'American Literature.'

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NOTES ON RHETORIC.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES:

SIRS:—PROFESSOR JOHN R. FICKLEN, in his paper on Rhetoric, MOD. LANG. NOTES for December 1889, column 463, raises the question: "If the participle be an error, how will PROF. JOHN S. HART defend the following sentence, which (p. 96 of his '*Rhetoric*') he offers as a correction of a faulty sentence from French?—'Controversies are perhaps drawing him away to other fields, not perhaps barren, *but which* can yield no such nourishment.'"—

Alas, PROF. JOHN S. HART can no longer defend himself on this earth. He was laid to rest thirteen years ago. He is now, I fondly believe, realizing the truth of the saying: πολλὰ μὲν θνητοῖς γλῶτται, μία δ' ἀθανάτοισι. As his son, I shall scarcely be charged with impropriety in undertaking to answer for him.

On the one hand, JOHN S. HART was opposed to all such locutions as "and who," "and which," etc. He held that they were pleonastic, and—although acknowledged in French—were not quite consonant with English syntax. But this particular phrase was not put by him in the same category. There is a difference between merely appositional and cumulative clauses, and clauses adversative. In the former, "and" is superfluous; thus, "I once knew a boy of good parts, faithful, attentive, *and* who carried off all the prizes." Why the "and?" It adds nothing to the expression. In adversative clauses, on the other hand, the sequence of thought is broken, hence there should be a corresponding break of expression. In the sentence under discussion the thought fully stated would run: "other fields, [which are] perhaps not barren,—but which can yield, etc." If there be any fault in the above, it lies in the

omission of "[which are]," rather than in the use of "but which." The "but" is needed to indicate contrast. Personally I have always favoured the "[which are]" construction; it has the advantage of precision. To omit it is to indulge in the slipshod practice of ignoring relative pronouns and particles, and this is a chronic weakness of English style. Our rhetoricians would do better, I think, to attack it *viribus unitis*, and not waste too much time over minor faults.

As for the quotation from LOWELL, it is in my judgment faulty. The clause "the lower classes of our private body-politic" merely *defines*, it *adds* nothing. LOWELL might have written, "refine the lower classes of our private body-politic, our senses, which, if left to their own instincts," etc. Where then is any place for an "and"?

In general let me give vent to a wish that has often occupied my leisure moments. It is this. May our teachers of rhetoric, instead of criticizing sentences by arbitrary rules from without inwards, evolve them from the *inner thought* outwards.

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IN ANSWER TO "DEFINITIONS WANTED."

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES:

SIRS:—Here are some "guesses at truth:"—

PLEWES may be the same as *plawes*=plays, frequent in M. E. and often spelt *pleize*, *pleowe*, &c.

MOBYLLS=M. E. *moeble*, *moble*=movables, as used by CHAUCER, 'C.T.', E. 1314; 'Morte Arthurs' 666:=anything on earth?

SETT HAULE=Randolfe's *ett*=eat=eating-hall?

ONE STRAYE=on stray=astray, scattered about? cf. BARBOUR'S 'Bruce' XIII, 195.

ENDORREI=Fr. *en* and *dorés*=gilded? Dainties used to be often gilded.

IRAL. *Ryal stone* occurs in 'Morte Arthure'=precious stones. Qy. *Iral*=Ural? topaz? WRIGHT and HALLIWELL define *iral*, *yal* vaguely as 'a precious stone.'

STRENKEI is M. E. *strenkelin*, *strenken*=aspergere, to scatter 'Orm.' 1049; 'Prompt,' 479.

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